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hind this the Japanese derivation of the word, which, though possible, of course, in the way the characters express it, may be possible also in another way, and that other may really be the true one. Following this course, Mr. Chamberlain suggests that *torii* is not derived from *tori* ('a bird') and *i* ('to be or rest'), but from *tōri* ('to pass through') and *i* ('to be'), which would make it 'a place of passing through.'

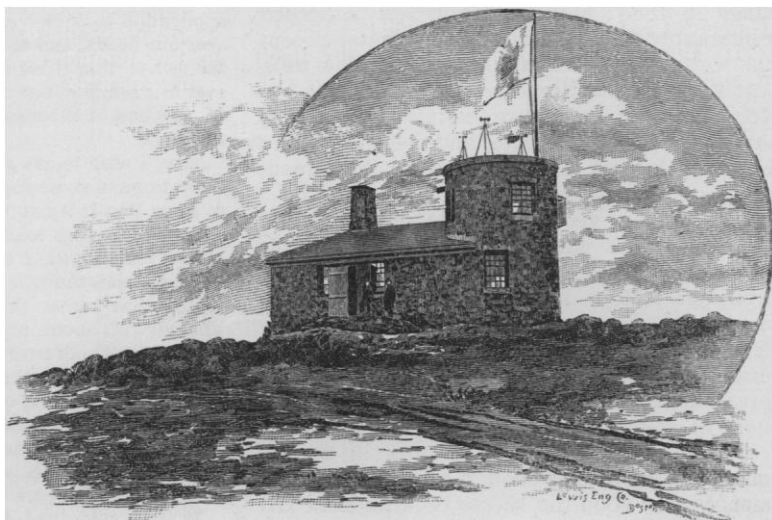
To account for such an improbable name as 'bird's rest,' it is customary to instance the well-known respect of the Buddhist religion for animals. The gateway is there, so it is said, to afford a roosting-place for the sacred pigeons which frequent many of the Japanese temples. But as we see, again and emphatically, from Korea, there is no original connection between Buddhism and the *torii*; for the red arrow gate has, in the peninsula, nothing whatever to do with Buddhist temples, and its name there is simply explanatory of its structure. This does not prevent birds roosting on it, as one happened to do at the moment the accompanying photograph was taken, for it must be for them an exceedingly convenient place to roost. But its popularity in Korea at least suggests, that, as regards the custom of the Japanese pigeons, the name probably followed the fact, rather than the fact a dedication.

PERCIVAL LOWELL.

THE METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATORY ON BLUE HILL.

THE meteorological observatory lately constructed by Mr. A. Lawrence Rotch on the summit of Blue Hill, near Boston, at an elevation of six hundred and thirty-five feet, is now in working order; and two monthly bulletins have been issued from it, containing summaries of winds and weather for February and March of the current year. The only other observatories in this country, elevated distinctly above the surrounding region, are those maintained by the U. S. signal-service on Mount Washington and at Pike's Peak, both

of which are at elevations greatly above that of Blue Hill. At the level of Pike's Peak, the cyclonic rotation of the winds is hardly observable, the observatory there being above the strata of the atmosphere whose circulation is seriously disturbed by passing storms. On Mount Washington the winds whirl around almost in a circle about the progressing storm-



centre. At Blue Hill we may hope to discover the true circulation of the lower air, unaffected by the natural or artificial irregularities of surface that modify the records of so many of our signal-service stations. The value of observations taken at moderate elevations is attested by the increasing number of mountain observatories in Europe. Ben Nevis is the latest on the list, and its records have already afforded material for several articles in *Nature* and other foreign journals. Germany has a station on the Brocken; France, on the Puy de Dôme and the Pic du Midi; while Switzerland possesses several more. As Blue Hill has the first private observatory of the kind in this country, we shall look with especial interest for the results of studies based upon its records. The accompanying figure is from a photograph taken by the observer, Mr. W. P. Gerrish. The large 'cold-wave' flag, when displayed from the pole on the tower, according to the signal-service predictions, can be seen by a number of villages around the base of the hill. An account of the building was read at a recent meeting of the New-England meteorological society, and published in the December number of the *American meteorological journal*.

W. M. D.